

South Dakota National Guard
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Soldiers to be honored at Freedom Salute

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Seven Soldiers of the Detachment 48, Operational Airlift Support Command will be honored for their service to the nation at a National Guard Freedom Salute Ceremony at 8 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 8, in Building 450 at Camp Rapid.

The public is encouraged to attend.

The detachment returned home last August after a six-month deployment to Afghanistan. It is comprised of five pilots and two operations specialists and provided aviation support by flying two high-performance C-12R Huron aircraft.

While deployed, the unit operated out of seven airports in Afghanistan to include Bagram, Kabul, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Herat, Mazur E Sharif, and Sharana and traveled throughout eight other countries in the U.S. Central Command's theatre of operations.

The unit provided a rapid-response delivery system to units throughout the region, delivering various cargos including personnel, vital repair parts, or lifesaving medical supplies. Overall, the unit completed 165 missions, transporting 1,080 passengers and 29,450 pounds of cargo, and logging more than 490 flight hours.

The seven members were awarded five Air Medals and two Army Commendation Medals for their six months of service in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The National Guard Freedom Salute Campaign is a dedication to the Soldiers, family members, and employers of units deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Noble Eagle and peacekeeping operations across the globe. On behalf of the National Guard, each eligible Soldier is presented with an encased American flag, a sequentially numbered commemorative coin, a certificate of appreciation and a lapel insignia.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Maj. Brendan Murphy at (605) 737-6721 or cell (605) 431-8753, or e-mail brendan.murphy1@us.army.mil.

NOTE: Since the terrorist attacks on America, the South Dakota National Guard has mobilized more than 3,100 Soldiers and 1,000 Airmen in support of the Global War on Terror. Currently, more than 70 Soldiers and Airmen from the South Dakota National Guard remain on duty in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locations throughout Southwest Asia and Europe. More than 4,300 National Guardsmen are available in South Dakota to provide support for state and national emergencies and homeland defense.